

square windows. There are two ranges of semicircular headed windows above, seventeen in each; each window having a central column. The building is of great length.—The Palazzo Pitti, of which Brunelleschi was the architect, was commenced in 1435; it is now the residence of the Grand Duke. The front, which is of great extent, is rusticated the whole height; the windows are all circular headed. The court at the back, and the Boboli Gardens, are much later; the former was the work of Ammannati, the architect of the Ponte della Trinità. He has employed columnar decoration, but retaining the rustics.—In the Palazzo Rucellai, built in 1460, the architect, Alberti, has employed three orders of pilasters; but the rusticated work, and the semi-circular headed windows are still preserved. The doors are of remarkably good character.—The Palazzo Strozzi is probably the finest example of the Florentine style; it was built in 1489 by Bandetta de Maiano, and Simone Pallajuolo, called *Cronaca*. The cornice is very fine. There are two ranges of windows, with circular heads, and square windows in the basement. The rustics are arranged with very pleasing effect, and there are few buildings in which the palatial character is so well attained.—The Palazzo Gondi, built in 1490, by Giuliano da San Gallo, is of very simple character, and merely remarkable for the complete success of the design. Like most of the Florentine buildings, the basement is raised on a couple of steps, extending the whole length of the front; an arrangement not often obtaining in England, but here greatly tending to the dignity of the edifice.—The front of the Palazzo Bartolini is lavishly embellished with statues and trophies; the cornice is also very good. Here the angles are formed by pilasters, round which the strings and cornice are broken. It was built by Baccio d'Agnolo, in 1520.

We now approach the period when Florentine architecture underwent a change. The building just noticed had windows with pediments, and other features resembling the Roman school; but in the Pandolfini Palace, by Raffaello d'Urbino, all the finish of the Roman school was imparted. It was built in 1530. All persons are aware, that is one of the most beautiful palaces of Italy, and that it has been imitated by Mr. Barry in the Travellers' Club. Subsequently, the architecture of Florence, in gaining greater resemblance to that of Rome, lost much of its distinctive character. In 1602, the Palazzo Roberto Strozzi was built by Scamozzi; it is remarkable for the arrangement of its windows, which are large and small in alternate perpendicular divisions.

The work under notice is in one volume, folio, and contains 109 plates, beautifully engraved in outline. There are plans, elevations, and some perspective views, and the illustrations include many buildings at Siena, Pisa, and elsewhere in Tuscany, which we may have some further opportunity of noticing. The churches of Florence, an interesting collection of early remains, have not received much notice, but the illustrations of the other edifices will well repay an examination of the book. The copy in the library of the Museum is defective, and it would greatly increase the usefulness of that institution were all continental works generally accessible. E. H.

WREN'S CHURCH—ST. BENET'S PINK.

SIR,—It seldom occurs that a church, together with all its fittings, font, organ, and even to the fire-buckets, is consigned to the auctioneer's hammer, and more especially when it happens to be one of Wren's. It appears to me, if the church is to be removed, that it would be better to take it away wholesale, and transplant it to the suburbs, where it would far outshine in appearance, the lath and plaster, cement and stained wood, of our modern churches. I think that all Wren's churches are good models for Protestant places of worship; there are no sedilia and the other remnants of popery, which continually creep into our modern churches; putting this out of the question, it would be far better to build the church up again in its original form, than to scatter it piecemeal to the highest bidders. I hope these suggestions will cause a stir to be made about so desirable an object.

I am, Sir, &c., OAK AND STONE.
London, Dec. 20th, 1845.

AWARDS OF THE OFFICIAL REFEREES.

DISTRICT SURVEYORS' FEES.

MR. ENTICOTT, of Deptford, having raised and altered a kitchen building attached to a dwelling-house of the third rate, Mr. R. P. Browne, the district-surveyor of Greenwich, required a fee of 11. 5s.; and on his refusing to pay it, summoned Mr. Enticott before Mr. Trail, one of the magistrates of the metropolitan police courts. Mr. Trail, on hearing the case, expressed his doubts whether Schedule C, part 7, should not be taken in connection with Schedule L, and the attached building be taken of the rate to which it would belong if built by itself, viz. fourth-rate, and entitle Mr. Browne to the fee for additions and alterations to that rate, viz. 10s.

Mr. Browne contended, in support of his claim of 11. 5s., that Schedule C, part 7, applied to construction and materials of attached or detached buildings only, and that Schedule L, so far as regarded the fees to be charged, is distinct, and that additions or alterations to attached or detached office-buildings are to be taken on the scale of the buildings to which they are attached, and that the building altered being attached to a building of the first class and third-rate, the fee was 11. 5s.

Mr. Trail, refraining from adjudicating on the question, the parties sought the award of the referees, and Mr. Browne agreed to pay the charges and expenses of the referees.

The award was:—"That the fee charged by the district-surveyor for an alteration of an attached building, should be the fee appointed by the said Act to be paid for alterations of buildings of the rate to which such attached building shall by itself belong, and not of the rate of the building to which such attached building is attached."

ROOF COVERINGS.

The referees have decided (on the requisition of Mr. McLeod and Mr. Stow, of Camberwell), that asphalt of Seyssel may be deemed a proper substance for covering a roof or other structure, provided such roof or other structure be wholly composed of, and be upborne by, incombustible matter, or matter indestructible by fire.

EXTERNAL LINE OF FRONTS.

Several awards have been made preventing the erection of shops or other projections, on the fore-courts of buildings, as the same would have projected in the opinion of the referees "beyond the general line of the fronts of the houses."

SHOP-FRONTS.

Mr. Hodges, in altering the Weavers' Arms, public-house, William-street, Bethnal-green, formed the whole front, as high as the first-floor, in wood-work,—the brick piers between the doors and windows being covered with "1½ inch deal to form rustic work." Mr. Hodges considered these might be deemed pilasters or wood-work, such as is by the Act permitted. The district-surveyor objecting, the award of the referees was sought, and was as follows:—

That these parts "are not to be deemed such pilasters or woodwork as are by the said Act permitted, but that any such pilasters, with the entablature above the same, must be executed of the same materials, as are by the said Act directed to be used for external walls, or of such other proper and sufficient materials as the said official referees may approve and permit, and so that the same do not overhang, encroach, or drip, upon any public way."

WIDTH OF STREETS.

Mr. Pownall, district-surveyor, having served Mr. Thomas Archbutt with notice that certain buildings in course of erection by the latter on the south side of Bainbridge-street, Oxford-street, were not more than 21 feet from the buildings on the north side of the street, instead of 40 feet, as prescribed by the Act, the opinion of the referees was sought. They awarded as follows:—

"That inasmuch as the roadway of the said Bainbridge-street, opposite to the buildings in question, has not been altered, and the thoroughfare of the said street has not been stopped, the said street is to be deemed to be an 'already formed' street, within the meaning of the Metropolitan Buildings Act: and inasmuch as the buildings in question are

being built not nearer to the buildings opposite thereto in the said street, than the previously existing buildings upon the site thereof, we do further determine and award that the same are not contrary to the said Act, so far as relates to the distance of such buildings from the buildings on the north side of the said street."

The costs, with the exception of those of certain adjourned meetings, caused by the building owner, were charged to the district surveyor. The costs of the adjourned meetings and 41. 4s. to the district surveyor for his attendances at these meetings, and his expenses, to be paid by the building owner.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE TERMS "STREET" AND "ALLEY."

On a piece of ground at the back of a house and garden in High-street, Homerton, occupied by Mr. Birkley, the only access to which ground is by a roadway 11 ft. wide from High-street, Mr. Loader wished to build five fourth-rate houses, leaving a space of 40 ft. between the front of them and the fence belonging to Mr. Birkley. Mr. Charles Humphreys, surveyor, on the part of Mr. Birkley, contended that as "every street is required to be of the width of 40 ft. at the least, and every alley must be of the width of 20 ft., and have two entrances thereto, each being of the full width of the alley, it is clear that under the rules concerning 'alley,' the buildings cannot be erected; and that under the rules for 'streets' it is equally impracticable, which defines (in the 2nd section) the terms 'so far as such meanings are not excluded by the context or by the nature of the subject matter, the word street to include every square, circus, crescent, street, road, or place, row, mews, lane, or place, along which carriages can pass, or are intended to pass.' It is evident from the context, as well as the nature of the subject matter, that as an alley is required to have two entrances not less than 20 ft. in width, a street can be intended to have no less; and it must be a place along which carriages can pass, or are intended to pass. Further, that as the approach to the said buildings can only be 11 ft. wide, this neither falls under the denomination of street or alley, for which a greater width is required."

The referees decided that the houses could not be built unless a road, forming the approach, be at the same time made of the statuteable width.

Costs to be paid mutually, the case being one of reasonable doubt.

THE BRIDGES OF CHINA.

THE stigma of inertness can, certainly, merely apply to this modern Eastern people, as we shall perceive that their ancient works (very ancient indeed) surpass *ours* considerably—nay surpass even the conception of what we have deemed hitherto possible. The name of a *De Guignes*,* from whose work most of this information is derived, precludes the possibility of mistake, at least in the main features.

The *Bridge of Layang*, over an arm of the *Seu* in China.—According to reports of travellers, the greatest bridge in the world. Erected in a similar way as the bridges of Babylon—but entirely of stone. Its length is said to extend to 26,800 Paris feet, and comprises 300 arches, or rather openings of pillars. These are not overpread by arches, but there are placed above these large slabs of stone, which form the roadway, 70 feet broad. The distance of the pillars is nearly 74½ feet, the latter being 70 feet high, and 15 feet broad, and strengthened with stone facings, of the form of triangular prisms, which extend over the whole height of the pillars up to the transversal slabs. The latter (of course more than 70 feet long) extend in breadth to fifteen feet, and have 9 feet in thickness. Other reports, however, assign no more than 43 feet, old Paris measure, to the distance of the pillars, and only 4½ feet to the breadth and thickness of the transversal slabs—by which, of course, the length of the bridge is reduced one-half. Even so, it would be an astonishing structure, being six times the length of the longest bridge in Europe, viz. the Pont de St-Espirit, at Lyons. The parapet is, according to some reports, a railing, according to others, a ballustrade, and every pillar supports a pedestal on

* *Voyages à Peking, Manille, &c., faits dans l'intervalle des années 1794 à 1801.* Paris, 1813: 410.